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ABSTRACT

This publication documents a successful literacy program for a specific at-risk group, the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School, Boston, Massachusetts. In operation since 1988, the Haitian Literacy Program is the longest running high school literacy program in the region for bilingual students with limited formal education. Through a case study approach, the educational success of these students and the program traits that staff and students believe have enabled academic achievement, high school graduation, and participation in higher education are examined. The program is designed for secondary school students with less than a fourth-grade level of formal education or no literacy skills in their native language or English. It is an intensive, self-contained program focused on developing the skills needed to participate in bilingual education classes. In its 9 years of operation, the program has averaged 20 students each year. Data were collected through case study and collaborative approaches from document reviews, ethnographic observations, interviews, and focus group discussions. Key elements of program success were identified as: (1) the commitment and dedication of the native language teacher; (2) the relationship between English as a second language and native language teachers and instruction; (3) the interdisciplinary, thematic, and self-contained instructional format; and (4) the self-determination of the students. Three appendixes contain discussions of data sources and initial literacy assessments and a literacy checklist. (Contains 16 references.) (SLD)

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ENABLING ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS WITH LIMITED FORMAL SCHOOLING

A STUDY OF THE HAITIAN LITERACY PROGRAM AT HYDE PARK HIGH SCHOOL IN BOSTON

Catherine E. Walsh

LAB

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Laboratory At Brown University (LAB)

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INTRODUCTION
Alapapòt

Do you know what it's like to be a high school teacher and have students who do not know how to hold a pencil or pen, who have difficulty forming letters, manipulating scissors, and sitting at a desk for extended periods of time? It's not that they're mentally handicapped; in fact they are more mature and eager to learn than other students. It is just that they have not had the opportunity to go to school....This is not something they trained us for in teacher preparation.

TEACHER OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

With bilingual students there is often a wide range in terms of academic preparation. But this population (students with little or no basic skills–literacy or numeracy) have needs that can't be addressed in the regular bilingual program. They are not special education kids; they are students who need an intensive, focused education.

BILINGUAL PROGRAM TEACHER

These are the highest of high risk students.

ATTORNEY, MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND ADVOCACY, INC.

These comments reflect a reality that is becoming increasingly widespread in secondary schools throughout the nation: growing numbers of incoming immigrant students with a limited formal education. While few cities and states collect data on these students, informal estimates indicate that 10-15% of bilingual students in many urban school districts may lack or have major gaps in their formal schooling. For certain immigrant populations, this percentage may be even higher. According to some school officials in Boston, for example, the number of middle and high school-aged students with limited formal schooling arriving from rural and/or war-torn areas of the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, and Latin America may be anywhere from 40-75%.[1]

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Without literacy skills and school-based knowledge, this population is "the highest of high risk students." These students are overrepresented in dropout rates, non-promotions, special education referrals, and often in disciplinary actions, the result of their high level of frustration. Yet their existence and needs are often ignored in the nation's schools; in federal, state, local, and school-based reform initiatives; and in the research literature (August and Hakuta, 1997; Olsen and Minicucci, 1992; Walsh, 1994).[2] The lack of awareness of and attention to this growing student population has been identified as a major problem by urban educators and bilingual communities in the northeast and in other parts of the nation.

This publication addresses this concern by documenting a successful literacy program in one Boston public school: the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School. In operation since 1988, the Haitian Literacy Program is the longest-running high school literacy program in the region for bilingual students with limited formal education and the only such program that we are aware of in the nation for Haitians. Through a case study approach, the publication examines students' educational success and the program traits that staff and students believe have enabled academic achievement, high school graduation, and higher education participation.

The study challenges the belief of many high school administrators that students who cannot read and write do not belong in high school and that high schools are not equipped to meet these students' needs. By means of a staff-developed program that functioned for many years without additional funds, teachers in the Haitian Literacy Program have not only taught students to read and write but also have enabled these students to make the transition into a regular bilingual education program and eventually graduate from high school. Moreover, some of the students have gone on to attend college.

This publication is for educational practitioners and those in universities, agencies, and organizations who work with schools in designing programs that will enable the academic success of these students.

The document can serve several uses:

- As a guide for discussing literacy programs with district administrators, principals, intake and assessment staff, and parents and students
- As a staff development tool for literacy teachers
- As a source of information and data for those engaged in school- and district-based reform and for local and state policymakers
- As a framework for cities struggling to appropriately address the academic needs of secondary students with limited formal schooling
- For educators grappling with what it means to educate "all children," the success of the Haitian Literacy Program teaches us valuable lessons about enabling academic achievement among the "highest of high risk students."

STUDENTS WITH LIMITED FORMAL SCHOOLING IN BOSTON: BACKGROUND ON STUDENT NEEDS AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Elèv k ap viv nan Boston e kl gen twou nan zafè lekòl yo: Enfòmasyon sou Bezwen ak Devlòpman Fòmèl Regilye

Like most major cities in the northeast, Boston has a sizable population of students who are non-native speakers of English. Approximately half of all Boston students speak a language other than English at home and about one-third of all Boston students are in bilingual programs. A growing number of those in need of bilingual programs have had limited formal schooling because of political or social conditions in their native countries. This has been particularly true with Haitians, now the second largest language group in the Boston public schools. Conditions of politics and poverty in Haiti in the late 1980s and early 1990s resulted in large numbers of student arrivals, particularly from rural areas, where schooling beyond the early elementary years is practically nonexistent.

School-based Responses to Haitian Students with Limited Schooling

Haitian administrators and teachers were the first in Boston to express concern that these students' academic needs could not be met in the regular bilingual program. In 1988, they sought my advice and support. During the 1988-89 school year, we worked together without any additional funds to develop and put into place a literacy program for Haitian students with limited formal schooling. This program, first located at English High School and now at Hyde Park High School, has continued to operate for the last 10 years largely because of the dedication of the core staff. In 1994, the program won an honorable mention in the Boston Management Consortium's City Excellence Awards. In 1997, Lionel Hogu, the program's head native language literacy teacher, won Boston's Golden Apple Award for excellence in teaching.

Other Boston secondary schools with students who have had limited formal schooling (Cape Verdean Creole, Spanish, and Vietnamese students) tried to establish similar programs in the early 1990s. However, program development has been limited because of inconsistent support from the district's central office and from administrators within each school. High staff attrition has also kept programs from moving forward as planned.[1]

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The Move from Voluntary to Mandatory Programs

In the early to mid-1990s, the voluntary nature of literacy programs in the Boston public school system changed. A legal complaint filed in the U.S. Federal Court by a group of parents alleged that their limited- or non-English speaking children were not served by Chapter I (now Title I) programs.[1] This action resulted in a *Consent Order* in 1992 regarding "improved and equal access to Chapter I programs to limited English proficient national origin linguistic minority students."

An amendment to the order in spring 1994 mandated the establishment of literacy programs at high schools and middle schools where there are English language learners with limited formal schooling. The Boston public school system is required to fund these programs from either Title I or city monies. The *Amended Consent Order* contains a detailed program model based on a "self-contained, ungraded, elementary format classroom with two teachers responsible for all instruction." This model, described in more detail below, evolved from the Haitian Literacy Program.

Boston appears to be the only school district in the region and nation with an established and mandated middle school and high school literacy program.[2] However, as mentioned above, the development and progress of literacy programs in individual Boston public schools is varied. According to some educators from Boston schools and the attorneys for the plaintiffs in the Title I case, the inconsistency in programs is due to insufficient central office support and direction, limited administrative support within schools, and a transient and unprepared staff. Moreover, there seems to be a belief that non-literate students do not exist and, if they do, they do not have a place in secondary schools.

Reform Connections

The *Superintendent's Comprehensive Reform Plan for the Boston Public Schools* (July 1996) identified as a primary goal the improvement of teaching and learning for all children. Recognizing the needs of a student population with limited schooling and seeking ways to integrate these needs into school-based reform are essential components of this "all children" agenda.

The urgency of addressing the needs of English language learners with limited formal schooling is crucial at the higher grade levels, where the cognitive demands of instruction particularly necessitate both literacy and

basic subject knowledge. Intensive programs are needed to improve teaching and learning for these students. Within a reasonable amount of time, such programs can enable students to take part in the broader school curriculum, accumulate the necessary credits and knowledge to graduate from high school, and possibly go on to higher education.

This case study, conducted during the 1996 school year, identifies the characteristics of the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School that support the development of basic skills and eventual high school graduation. The study also provides much-needed knowledge for those involved in school-based reform, including Hyde Park High School and the Boston public school system in its Title I *Consent Order* compliance; other schools with similar populations in Boston, the region, and the nation; administrators and reform teams interested in nontraditional structures; and those concerned with the improvement of teaching and learning for all children.

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THE STUDY'S INVESTIGATIVE PROGRAM AT HYDE PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Pwogram Rechèch ki te fèt nan Hyde Park High School

We know the program works, yet we have no data or documentation to prove this success or to share it with others interested in establishing similar programs. We need to do a study of the program that could serve this purpose.

HAITIAN LITERACY PROGRAM TEACHER

The most critical factor in designing this study was the motivation of program staff. In numerous conversations with the staff about the focus and approaching an evaluative study, I realized that the study should be collaborative, process-oriented, and connected to the program's philosophy. The staff and I agreed that the study needed to put the program and students in a real-life context and to provide a learning experience for all involved. Based on this agreement, we designed a study that combined two investigative approaches: the case study method and collaborative inquiry.

The case study method provided a useful way to gather detailed, descriptive data on the Haitian Literacy Program for understanding the program's unique features and student success. Because a case study approach can provide empirical program descriptions and capture students' experiences, it affords a holistic approach to program evaluation.[2]

Collaborative inquiry is used by the LAB at Brown University in much of its urban research. This research approach engages those who work, study, and have a stake in schools in raising questions about and investigating aspects of these institutions, in order to better understand, shape, and sustain effective programs and reforms. In this shared process, outside experts and researchers no longer assume the sole control over research, and outcomes obtained are no longer the sole focus or determinant. Instead, methods and research are shaped by students and school staff as a useful and inclusive form of pedagogy.

The collaborative inquiry involved Hyde Park High School staff and students in naming questions to be explored, deciding how best to obtain answers to these questions, taking an active role in the research, discussing findings, and sharing perceptions about analysis and implications.

Collaborative inquiry thus became a vital part of numerous staff and classroom sessions. While this sometimes made the research less "matter-of-fact" and less clearly defined, it gave the research a dynamic quality that traditional approaches do not provide.[7] For example, we extended discussions about the program and student success beyond focused sessions and made our findings of immediate use to administrators, teachers, and students.

The case study method and collaborative inquiry formed the study's design and addressed the following questions:

- What is the Haitian Literacy Program, whom does it serve, and what are the program's key features?
- How has the Haitian Literacy Program contributed to the academic success of students with limited formal schooling?
- What are the characteristics or elements of this program which students and staff believe have enabled its success?

Data were collected from a variety of sources (see Appendix A), including:

- Document and record reviews
- Ethnographic observations
- Interviews, including one-on-one interviews with school staff and with former students now out of school, and paired student interviews where literacy students interviewed students who have made the transition out of the program into bilingual classes
- Focus group discussions with current and former literacy students

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THE HAITIAN LITERACY PROGRAM AT HYDE PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Pwogram alfabetizasyon Ayisyen nan Lekol sekonde Hyde Park

The School Context

In 1994-95, Hyde Park High School's total student enrollment was 75% Black, 9% Caucasian, 1% Asian, and 15% Hispanic. Haitians, who make up a significant portion of the student body, are counted in the school's profile report as Black. In 1994-95, approximately 22% of students (208) were enrolled in the Haitian Bilingual Program.

Hyde Park High School is one of the poorest high schools in Boston and one of the schools least chosen by parents and students in the city's "controlled choice" desegregation plan.[1] Special features of the school, listed in the school's December 1995 "Report on Teaching and Learning," include a banking and finance magnet theme, a ninth-grade bilingual cluster, and active mainstreaming of special needs students. No mention is made of the Haitian Literacy Program in the report.

In comparison with other Boston schools, Hyde Park High School ranked in the lower-third percentile in school improvement in 1995. This ranking included dropout rates, student and staff attendance, and standardized achievement scores. The low achievement of Hyde Park students is evidenced by the fact that tenth-grade students ranked in the lower-third percentile of all city schools in math and reading. In response to the academic problems at the school, the superintendent dismissed the headmaster in June 1996.

Despite the less than optimal environment of the school, staff in the bilingual education department have struggled to maintain a supportive, quality program that appropriately addresses the needs of all students, including those with limited formal schooling. With close to three-quarters of Haitian bilingual students in the school eventually going on to college,[2] staff believe the school's Haitian bilingual program is the strongest in the city.

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Purpose, Goals, and Objectives of the Program

The Haitian Literacy Program is designed for secondary students with less than a fourth-grade level of formal education and limited or no literacy skills in their native language or English. It is an intensive, self-contained program focused on developing literacy-based skills and basic academic skills needed to participate in bilingual classes. The Haitian Literacy Program is administratively housed within the school's bilingual education department, but this program is unique in its purpose, structure, and instructional approach.

To paraphrase the words of native language literacy teacher Lionel Hogu, the program's purpose is to help Haitian students with limited formal schooling to build the skills necessary to do schoolwork and to present what they know. Because of the program's intensive instructional focus, 80% of the students are able to develop these skills in a year and then move into the bilingual program. Twenty percent of the students need a second year, often because of learning problems.

The long-term goals of the program include:

- Promotion of native language and English literacy skills, and linguistic, cognitive, and academic development across content area subjects
- Successful transition into the regular ninth-grade bilingual cluster within one to two years'
- Eventual high school graduation

The program also supports the following objectives:

- To increase students' self-confidence through meaningful learning experiences that promote literacy and socialization skills
- To use students' language, experience, and knowledge as the foundation for their learning
- To provide supportive, structured, and challenging classroom environments that respond to students' social and academic needs and help them adapt to U.S. schools and society

The Haitian Student Population

The literacy program serves Haitian students 14 to 21 years old who have had no more than a basic elementary education. Students are identified at the time of enrollment through interviews and school-developed Haitian Kreyol and English as Second Language (ESL) literacy tests given by the native language literacy teacher, the head of the bilingual education department, or the guidance counselor for bilingual students (see Appendix B for the ESL and Haitian Kreyol initial literacy assessments).

Literacy students can be divided into two levels or groups: (1) those with severely limited (less than fourth grade) or no formal schooling and little or no basic literacy skills in any language; and (2) those with sporadic or interrupted formal education who remain three to five years below the reading level of their age-related bilingual peers (Walsh, 1991). Most Haitian students in the literacy program at Hyde Park High School fall into the first category, averaging at most about a second- or third-grade education.

With only two or three years of formal schooling and many years removed from the school environment, these students pose a unique challenge. Not only are many students unable to read and write in any language or to do basic numeracy, they are also unaccustomed to sitting at a desk for an extended period of time, remaining silent, working cooperatively in groups, or focusing on "academic" tasks that seem irrelevant to real-life concerns. Thus, while they may have a desire to learn, their preparedness to learn in U.S. classrooms often needs to be developed. In addition, some literacy students may also have special needs. At Hyde Park High School, these students are served by special needs staff for bilingual students and may also participate in the literacy program.

In its nine years of operation, literacy program enrollment has averaged 20 students a year. However, because of political and economic conditions in Haiti, there have been years when increased immigration has inflated program numbers. For example, in the mid- to late 1980s, Haitian immigration was particularly high, with large numbers arriving in Boston, many from rural areas. Enrollment during the program's first year (1988-89) was 40, divided into two instructional groups.

In 1989, English High School (where the program was initially housed) moved. The Haitian bilingual students were divided between Hyde Park (where literacy program staff were sent) and West Roxbury High School.

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Because the district central office had not given the literacy students a specially designated code, many literacy students were lost in the move. Some students were given a mainstream designation; others were sent to different schools. Teachers and administrators went to the community and the streets to find the students who had been misplaced and were in need of services, but many students could not be found. As a result, enrollment significantly dropped in the 1989-90 school year. By 1990-91, enrollment had once again stabilized.

The 1992-93 school year brought an influx of refugee students who arrived in Boston from the Guantanamo camps. The majority of these students were older. They had virtually no schooling and had problems beyond the school's control, as well. Success with this one group of students was limited.

With the increasing placement of Haitian bilingual students at other Boston high schools (for example, West Roxbury High School, Dorchester High School, and Madison Park High School) and a decline in overall Haitian immigration, the program has experienced a decline in enrollment in recent years. However, as Hyde Park High School staff point out, this decline does not mean that new Haitian arrivals are better prepared academically than earlier students. The prevalence of the literacy problem remains about the same. As the head of the bilingual education department explained,

> At issue instead is the fact that Haitian students continue to be placed without regard to or consideration of their literacy skills. The result is that at other schools they are not "discovered" as students with literacy needs until several months or more, if at all, into the school year. Sometimes they are then transferred to Hyde Park—and we have to make up for the lost time they've spent—or sometimes they are given some limited services at that school. And sometimes they are ignored. At this school we assess all Haitian students upon arrival to determine if they have literacy needs. This does not happen elsewhere. If students were appropriately assessed at the time of enrollment and placed in the literacy program here, we would have much larger numbers.

Grade Placement

Students with only a few years of formal education have much to learn before they can graduate from high school. In order to maximize academic learning time, Haitian Literacy Program students are expected to spend an average of five years in high school (if age restrictions allow). Students are recorded as ninth graders (regardless of age) when they enter the school. They usually remain in the program for one year and their work is ungraded. These students do not begin the four-year high school course of study until after they have made the transition to the regular bilingual program.

The Instructional Model

The Haitian Literacy Program uses an elementary school format or self-contained instructional model that maximizes both literacy development and learning time and involves students through theme-based instruction.[10] This model is based on the belief that while the students lack literacy skills, they bring a wealth of knowledge and experience that should be acknowledged and built upon. Proponents of this model believe that literacy can best be developed in the language students know best (Haitian Kreyol) and that literacy in English can develop at the same time as native language literacy.

Three key features define the instructional model:

1. An interdisciplinary thematic approach to curriculum development
2. A cooperative relationship between the native language literacy and English as a Second Language teachers and between native language and English as a Second Language instruction
3. Structure, consistency, and a supportive learning environment

The Interdisciplinary, Thematic Approach

The first key feature of the instructional model is its interdisciplinary, thematic approach to curriculum development. In this approach, the curriculum is based on themes that connect instruction to students' real-life experiences and concerns. As teachers in the Haitian Literacy Program have found, this approach is key to keeping these students in school and interested in learning.

Chosen by the native language literacy teacher, the themes reflect issues that students worry about or have experienced (for example, being a newcomer in the United States and in the high school, immigration, and comparisons of

Haiti and the United States). Often, the themes are presented visually and show a problem or conflict that stimulates discussion. For example, in presenting the "newcomer" theme, the teacher uses a photograph of a Haitian-looking student sitting in a corner on the floor of a school corridor. The expression on the student's face could be interpreted as scared, sad, angry, lonely, or dejected.

Photographs and visual representations, or what Freire (1970) refers to as codifications or codes, are often photocopied onto a transparency and projected on the wall with an overhead projector. The native language literacy teacher then engages students in a problem-posing and brainstorming process. Students describe what they see, define the problem portrayed, share similar feelings or experiences, and share possible solutions to the problem. This process involves students in developing the theme, defining subthemes, and identifying topics for the academic instruction that will follow.[1] Through this process, students develop a sense of ownership for the curriculum. As a result, student motivation and interest are seldom problems.

The native language literacy teacher then shares the students' comments with the ESL teacher. Both teachers work together in planning instruction based on the theme and subthemes. This planning requires thinking about how to use the theme to develop literacy and language skills, as well as knowledge and skills in subjects such as math, social studies, and science.

A variety of materials are used to guide, direct, enhance, and supplement the teaching and learning process. These texts are often created by the teachers, since materials for this student population are not widely available. Teacher-developed assessments, as well as a literacy checklist developed by me and literacy program staff are used to measure student progress. See Appendix C for a copy of the checklist.

The L1 and L2 Connection

A second key feature of the instructional model is the relationship it makes between native (L1) and second language (L2) instruction. The native language literacy teacher and the ESL teacher work together to organize instruction based on common themes, academic concepts, and literacy skills. The native language literacy teacher introduces these themes, concepts, and skills. Each day, in two periods of literacy-based ESL, the ESL teacher builds upon the literacy teacher's instruction. Collaborative planning time is built into both teachers' schedules.

Connecting ESL literacy instruction to the information and skills developed in the native language class is crucial. It enables the ESL teacher to build upon what students know and enables students to use this knowledge to learn English. This approach does not mean repeating in English lessons first conducted in Haitian Kreyol. Rather, it means integrating native language content and ESL instruction in ways that afford students a more holistic learning experience.

As the ESL teacher, native language literacy teacher, head of the bilingual education department, and guidance counselor all concurred, this approach speeds up the process of English language and literacy acquisition. It also encourages literacy students to view themselves as "knowers," thus helping to lessen the negative self-perception so often developed by these students in high school.[12]

Structure, Consistency, and a Supportive Learning Environment

The third key feature of the instructional model is the structure and support it provides. The traditional high school curriculum segments knowledge into specific subject categories; limits learning to 40-minute, once-a-day intervals; and presents varied teaching environments and styles. For students with limited literacy and school experience, this structure can diminish learning and student participation.

Staff maintain that students with limited schooling work best in a consistent, integrated learning environment that is safe, supportive, and accepting of their backgrounds. The Haitian Literacy Program's instructional model responds to students' needs by offering an alternative to the traditional high school structure.

This alternative has the following characteristics:

- Block scheduling
- Interdisciplinary teaching
- Teacher consistency
- A mostly self-contained classroom base

Academic core classes are "block scheduled" and are taught by Lionel Hogu, the native language literacy teacher, primarily within one classroom.[13] These core classes include developmental reading, social studies, basic math and numeracy, and scientific methods. According to program staff, block scheduling with the same teacher is important because it provides instructional flexibility, focus, and consistency. The structure allows the teacher to connect subject matter, to build upon themes in an interdisciplinary fashion, and to observe students' development across the curriculum and adjust instruction accordingly. As mentioned above, in addition to the core classes taught predominantly in Kreyol, students also attend two periods of literacy-based ESL every day.

Teacher stability and consistency were also identified as important, since students in the first year of the program require both intensity and constancy of instruction. This consistency helps create a safe and supportive learning environment where, as is true in elementary classrooms, teaching takes on a personal and integrated approach.

According to staff, Hogu's stability and consistency have been major factors in program and student success. Hogu has been with the program from the beginning. The ESL literacy component has been less stable, however, with ESL teachers rarely staying in the position for two consecutive years. According to the department head, this has been primarily due to teaching assignments by the Office of Teacher Placement. Maria Moreira, the ESL teacher at Hyde Park High School at the time of this study, was an exception. In 1996-97, she had been teaching in the program for three years.

By providing a self-contained classroom base, scheduling the majority of instruction with one teacher, creating a safe and accepting learning environment, and using a theme-based approach that links first and second language instruction, the program affords a structured and supportive environment. It also integrates teaching and learning in ways that are holistic and more like real-life learning.

Teacher Preparation

In order to be effective, literacy teachers need specific preparation that is not typically provided in university programs. As Hogu explained,

> It is helpful if you've had some experience in elementary education and/or in adult literacy teaching, particularly Freirian-based" like I've had. But you also need training that is focused on a way of teaching that is interdisciplinary and exciting to students. You need to know how to teach with themes, how to introduce themes that are of interest to students, build on them in the different subjects like math and science, for example, and then work with the ESL teacher as partners so he/she can build further on these themes in English. You need to know how to teach literacy in the native language and English in all the subjects and how to prepare students so they can transition into the bilingual program. Also how to prepare materials.

As a former ESL teacher in the literacy program once remarked,

> The program I was in to become an ESL teacher never talked about what to do when a high school student cannot manipulate a pencil or scissors, is not used to sitting at a desk. Knowing how and where to begin is essential, just as it is essential to know how to connect to what students do know in their native language.

According to the staff (teachers, guidance counselor, and the department head) of the Haitian Literacy Program, the strong preparation they received is essential to the program's operation and to student success. The staff were able to participate in workshops and credit-bearing courses that I taught at the New England Multifunctional Resource Center and at the University of Massachusetts. I also provided ongoing support to the teachers and programs.

The Boston public school system still does not recognize such training as a requisite to literacy program teaching, nor does it consider that trained literacy teachers possess specialized knowledge and skills. Literacy teachers in Boston public schools are not required to have any special certification or training other than that required for bilingual education or ESL teachers under state regulations. While the 1994 *Amended Consent Order* states that staff training is a critical component for success with the literacy program, it does not require such training but instead states that teachers should have a background in elementary education or reading and cooperative learning. This consent order also recommends that,

> ...all literacy teachers should have successfully completed at least one graduate level course in literacy instruction and one in second language acquisition....Alternatively, the School Department may elect to offer in-service training opportunities for literacy program teachers of the same scope and rigor of graduate-level course work.

Since the passage of the *Amended Consent Order*, the Boston public school system has offered Title I-funded courses for new literacy teachers. I taught the first of these courses; in years since, they have been taught by Title I staff who attended the first course. Course content has included the following:

- Social, cultural, and functional definitions of literacy and the significance of each in practice
- Student identification and initial evaluation
- Case studies of individual literacy students and a collective examination of student work
- Instructional models and the L1 and L2 connection
- Identification of literacy-related skills (those required of high school students and those that literacy students typically need)
- Thematic, interdisciplinary curricular approaches and theme unit development
- Tools and techniques for literacy development across the curriculum
- Ongoing methods of assessment and evaluation, including criteria for grading and program transition

These courses have been helpful for new literacy teachers. However, as one central office administrator explained, teachers are not required to take these courses. As a result, teachers most in need of the courses do not take them. Moreover, because there is no security in literacy positions, teacher attrition rates are high. Those who have been trained often move on or are transferred within a year to another school and position. The central office administrator went on to note,

> As someone who is now responsible for getting these literacy programs into shape, I can say that staff development is probably one

of the most crucial factors. The Haitian Literacy Program has been successful because the staff is trained and committed. In other Boston schools needing to do literacy programs, this commitment is, except in the case of a couple of teachers in one or two schools, not the same. For this reason, staff training has to be a mandated part of literacy program development.

MEASURES OF STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS

Jan Yo Mezire Pwogrè Elèv yo

This section examines the contribution of the Haitian Literacy Program to students' educational success as defined by the program's goals: linguistic, cognitive, and academic development; successful transition to the bilingual cluster; and high school graduation and enrollment in higher education institutions. The section draws from data from students and staff as well as from observations and reviews of records.

Present and former literacy students had several opportunities to share their viewpoints on the literacy program and its effectiveness in enhancing their academic development. The first opportunity was through a dialogue with present literacy students during a double-period class session. The literacy program teacher and I began the dialogue by asking students to discuss good and bad aspects of the program. As the dialogue progressed, students offered personal accounts of how the program had benefited them. At the end of this dialogue, students constructed ten questions to ask of former students. These questions are listed in Appendix A. The dialogue session, conducted in Kreyol, was audio-recorded and later transcribed and translated.

The second opportunity for students to share their perspectives occurred during the paired student interviews. During two consecutive class periods, students currently in the program interviewed former literacy students to ascertain their opinions about the program. These interviews utilized the ten questions mentioned above. A total of 16 interviews were conducted. All interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed and translated.[3] At the end of the paired interviews, during a third class period, a smaller group of current and former students talked informally about the program and their experiences.

Staff were also interviewed, including the assistant headmaster, one ESL teacher and three Haitian bilingual teachers who teach literacy students after they are mainstreamed, and the native language and ESL teachers who teach in the literacy program. I interviewed staff using four guiding questions (see Appendix A). The interviews focused on staff perceptions of how the Haitian Literacy Program helped students succeed.

Promoting Linguistic, Cognitive, and Academic Development

> The learning environment in the classroom today is particularly charged. Several students are at the window checking the outside temperature from a thermometer that had been placed outside the window. A couple of more students are standing next to a student-made chart, ready to record the temperature and compare it with that of other days in the last couple of weeks. They are asking those at the window, "What are your findings?" I notice other students working in small groups. One group is taking their coats on and off and talking rapidly in Kreyol about what seems to be related to temperature changes. Another is making a chart about climate contrasts between Haiti and the United States and their implications. It is in both Kreyol and English. The teacher is moving around, asking questions of the groups, obviously (from the faces of the students) challenging their thinking. If I didn't know better, I would think this was a bilingual program not a literacy program class. There certainly is a high level of academic engagement.
>
> *- author's ethnographic notes*

These notes are similar to other notes I took over several months. On each occasion that I observed the Haitian Literacy Program, I found students actively engaged in constructive knowledge and in applying their developing language skills. While Kreyol was the language of dominant use in native language classes, students were encouraged to use English in academically purposeful ways. In both the native language and ESL classes, students' linguistic, cognitive, and academic development was evident and integrated; the result of the instructional method and the collaboration among teachers.

Students' comments support the observation that there is a high level of engagement with learning. For example, during the open discussion, current students spent a considerable amount of time discussing what they liked about the class; this "like" was invariably explained in terms of what and how they were being taught and what they were learning. Many of their comments focus on language skills acquisition (learning to speak English or understanding better because the teacher taught in Kreyol). It is important to keep in mind that these students were not only limited in English when they entered, they also had little or no basic skills or knowledge of subject matter in any language.

Comments included the following:

> I like the teacher. I like everything he does with us. If we didn't have him to teach us the basics, we would have a lot of problems later on.

> I like the class because it is good for me. If I were in another class, I would not understand anything. So this is our first step. We need to start from the beginning and not rush things. We need to do step by step, do simpler things before going to more advanced ones.

> I am thankful to the person who created this program. At first I could not even understand what "good morning" meant. Now I am not fluent yet, but I can get by, thanks to Mr. Hogu. I was not that bad in math when I was in Haiti but I've learned a lot. I know how to speak Kreyol, but could not write it. Mr. Hogu has helped me both in Kreyol and English. He did a great job. I am catching up in math; I am still having a great deal of difficulty with English, especially the pronunciation. It is my hope that next year I will be able to be in a class with American students so that I can hear them speak; maybe I would make more progress. As Mr. Hogu told us, it is up to us to move up; only our progress can bring about the change.

Students currently in the program were curious about what the former students had learned. Five out of the ten questions they constructed (see questions 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 in Appendix A) had such a focus. A number of former students described what was taught and discussed what they had learned:

> They taught us how to speak, read, and write English, and a lot of other things that are useful to us now.

> We had math, social studies, reading (which was excellent); we had it in both Kreyol and English. Many students who did not know how to read and write Kreyol learned to do so.

> I wasn't that good in math; the teacher helped me. I was not good in Kreyol either; he taught me how to read and write Kreyol. I can do all that, thanks to the class.

> It did a lot for us. There are so many things we did not know.

Several students spoke about the literacy-related skills they learned:

> I learned to begin a sentence with a capital letter–that was my main mistake. I learned how to write capital letters. I had great interest in the class because of all the help I got.
>
> It helped me achieve certain goals. Myself, I would often forget to use capital letters; the class helped me write complete sentences, know where to put periods, and where not to put them.

Other students commented on how the class had helped support their current school work, increase their independence, and enable possibilities that they did not have before, such as graduation:

> Due to all the skills I learned in this class, I can now function well in my classes.
>
> It provided me with the basics to function in my current classes.
>
> I can do things by myself, thanks to this class.
>
> It did a lot for us. Some of the students who were in this class graduated already.

Finally, the words of one student made clear what is behind the teaching methods and the program:

> They were looking for a means, a way to make us learn with better result.

Of the questions students constructed, the question about becoming smarter ("If at first you were not very smart, how did you become smarter?") is probably the most interesting and revealing. At its base seems to be a shared belief among the students that "being smart" requires developing basic skills and that this program will enable "smartness" or literacy. In responding to the question, former students spoke about aspects of the class or program or the skills they learned there:

> I learned the basics in this class to help me in other classes.
>
> I had one teacher for four different subjects.
>
> I never spoke to disturb the class. I paid attention to the teacher, took notes. I did my best to understand. At home I used my dictionary and I studied.

> Well, some teachers are better than others. They taught us well.
>
> I learned well.

Some of the responses also revealed students' determination and role in improving their academic abilities:

> I became smarter because I remained in school. I studied the subject matter required. I went to summer school. Very often I go to the library. I do research. I read a lot. I use my dictionary a lot.
>
> I progressed because I studied at home and again at school.
>
> It happens often that you may not be too smart at first; but if you set your mind to it, you will become smart.
>
> I was not smart at the beginning, but I was very devoted. There is no moron on earth. God gave us all a brain. If for example, today you cannot do something, when you go home, think about it and say, "I want to do it." That's how you become smarter.

One measure of academic improvement is grade average. While in the Haitian Literacy Program, most students' grades averaged between B and C. The only students with poor or failing grades were those with problems that extended well beyond limited schooling or literacy concerns. Many of these students were older, had arrived in Miami by boat, and had been kept in the Guantanamo camps.

Since students are not given standardized tests while in the literacy program, there were few "standard" measurements for academic growth. However, as John Barnes, the guidance counselor for bilingual students, pointed out,

> Before students are mainstreamed, we usually look at samples of their classroom work and compare this to what they did on the literacy test when they entered. The "before" and "after" examples show us the dramatic ways students have grown. Students that initially could barely write their names, and left the rest of the test blank, now at the end of the program can write short essays with relative ease. Just recently, I showed a student her before and after work. She laughed and said she couldn't believe how far she had come or that she had ever been so limited in her ability to read and write. It is seeing these successes over and over that tell me that the

program works, that it definitely promotes students' linguistic and academic development.

When asked about students' growth, a number of administrators and teachers cautioned that academic success of literacy students is not something that can be measured by a grade or a test. An ESL teacher's comments emphasize the complexity and significance of students' progress:

> They didn't know any school skills, how to work with a pen, to sit down for an extended period of time. They begin with nothing and at the end they can read and write...You have to be able to see the everyday development to understand. They are like seeds; we prepare the ground and help them grow. Then they take off and progress on their own.

While tests or grades offer points of examination, they do not tell the complete story of how far students have come or what students have accomplished in terms of linguistic, cognitive, and academic development within one to two years. "

Successful Transition into the Bilingual Cluster

All staff felt strongly that the literacy program had a major impact on enabling students' academic success in bilingual and mainstream classes. The assistant headmaster, who also teaches a course in the math department, described one measure of the program's success:

> The best evidence that the program has positively impacted the academic success of students is the fact that there is no obvious difference between literacy students and bilingual students after the literacy students are mainstreamed. In the Algebra 2 class I teach, I can't see any difference between the former literacy students and the other bilingual students....Math is the first mainstream course students take. No math teacher has said the kids can't handle it.

A Haitian teacher of biology and health courses in the bilingual cluster also spoke from experience:

> I see a major difference with the students who come after one or two years in the middle school and those that come from Mr. Hogu's class. After completing the program with Hogu, they are well prepared to follow the biology or health course...They usually have difficulty the first three months or so, but after that they function normally in class...The academic impact shows: they can function normally, do homework, pass tests, do as well as any other student.

Several bilingual program and ESL teachers noted that another critical factor of success is whether students can continue to learn and progress a year or more after finishing the program. As one teacher noted,

> Eighty to 90 percent of students improve the most dramatically from the year one to year two transition. The year after they have been transitioned, I can really see that progress is on the way.

According to Hogu, the age at which the students enter the program affects their progress during and after their participation in the program. He maintains that the students who are 14 to 17 years old are more focused in class and have different academic expectations and aspirations than older students, who tend to be preoccupied with adult issues and concerns. As a result, the older students are less able to concentrate on their studies.

John Barnes, the guidance counselor for bilingual students, interviewed former literacy students now in the bilingual cluster. One example of a literacy student who made remarkable progress is Igenie. Barnes noted,

Igenie had only a basic elementary education when she entered Hyde Park High School in 1994. She had difficulty writing more than a simple sentence in her native Kreyol and had virtually no knowledge of English. Igenie spent one year in the literacy program and was then placed in the bilingual program where she is still enrolled. In 1996, Igenie won the English spelling bee for her entire grade. Excerpts from a book report she wrote in October 1996 follow:

> Never too late is a very interesting book...The main character are Laurie and Tony....Laurie had heard so much about Tony. He'd been leading man in the school play and class president for two years in a row. He'd even been voted "most popular guy" by his senior class, according to Steven....At the end of the book Laurie came to Steven said "oh, Steven" Laurie said. "I've made such a terrible mistake. You were right about Tony. He's awful! How could I have been so stupid. I should have known this was wrong from the start."

In the open dialogue with the literacy program students, one student mentioned Igenie's progress as a measure of program success:

> With regard to the progress some students have made, let me mention Igenie who did not know much when she came. She's right now in advanced ESL and she won the spelling contest. I think it is due to this program where Mr. Hogu has given her access to a lot of knowledge both in English and Kreyol. As a result, she can speak, read, and write English and she is holding a job.

Barbara is another student who made rapid progress in the literacy program. In his notes on Barbara, Barnes observed:

> Barbara went to school until about the second grade in Haiti. Before coming to Hyde Park High School, she spent a short amount of time at a Boston middle school. Entrance tests at Hyde Park showed her to have very limited literacy skills in both Kreyol and English and to be hearing impaired.

Barbara spent two years in the literacy program. Now, three years later, she is a senior. Excerpts from an October 1996 homework assignment in her ESL 2 class show the growth in English literacy she has achieved:

> My friend's name is Kathia, she is my best friend. I met her when I was in 11 grade, last year. She's beautiful student. She is always happy. We are always happy together. Sometimes she's funny. I like to laugh at her.

Although Barbara has a decent command of English, reading, and writing, and could graduate in June, she has asked to spend another year at the school to improve her English and better prepare herself for college.

Igenie and Barbara are two of the many students who completed the literacy program and successfully mainstreamed into bilingual classes. Grades of former literacy students afford an additional indicator of this achievement. For example, a record review of graduates showed an average of C+ for former literacy students in the bilingual cluster. No student had lower than a C-, while many had grades of B or B-.

High School Graduation and Postsecondary Education

One of the best measures of student and program success is the number of students who have graduated from high school and gone on to higher education. Between the 1988-89 and the 1991-92 school years, a total of 77 students were enrolled in the Haitian Literacy Program. Because of the difficulty in locating records for some students, particularly those who were originally enrolled in the Haitian Literacy Program at English High School and those who may have changed schools or left the system, we do not know for certain the exact percentage of students who eventually completed high school. Based on the records that could be found, 38 out of 77 students (49%) are known to have graduated. Five of these students spent two years in the literacy program.

The average age at which these graduates entered the literacy program was 16.5; ages ranged from 14 to 19. Since literacy program students generally spend five years in high school before graduating, most of the students were over 20 years old upon graduation.

While locating student records was difficult, finding out the number of graduates who had gone on to higher education was even more complicated, since Hyde Park High School does not maintain such information. To determine

participation in higher education, we attempted to find and contact individual graduates. A total of 15 out of 38 high school graduates (or 39%) are known to have gone on to higher education, a majority to two-year colleges. Several students went on to four-year colleges.

Because many Haitian students do not have the necessary legal documentation to enroll in colleges and universities, this percentage is impressive. For students who entered the Haitian Literacy Program with very limited literacy skills and virtually no knowledge of English, four or five years is a relatively short amount of time to acquire English, develop English reading and writing skills, and complete the necessary academic requirements to graduate from high school.

While the data presented above show the numbers of known graduates and higher education enrollees, they do not reveal the odds that individual students have confronted and surpassed in their struggle for an education; nor do they tell the stories of individual student progress. For instance, one student with the equivalent of three years of formal schooling in Haiti graduated from high school in 1993, completed two years of community college, and was then accepted into a psychology degree program at a four-year university. Two additional vignettes compiled by John Barnes, based on his interviews with former students, serve as further examples of student success over difficult odds:

> M.B. entered the literacy program in 1988 after having completed the equivalent of fifth grade in Haiti. She remembers distinctly that learning grammar in her native Kreyol helped her understand verb systems in English. Within two years she felt at ease listening to and understanding English.
>
> M.B. graduated in 1993 and went on to study business administration at Fisher College. After a year and a half, she transferred to Roxbury Community College's Program in Computer Information Systems where she is now in her second year. In order to pay for her college education, M.B. works in a retail clothing store.
>
> R.A. attended school until only about the fourth grade in Haiti before coming to the United States. One year in the literacy program at Hyde Park High School gave R.A. the necessary basic skills to then fol-

low the normal progression through the bilingual program, reach an ESL 4 level by senior year, and graduate within the regular four year time period.

After graduation, R.A. worked for a year with City Year doing community service in a homeless shelter, and in an elementary school, where he served as a teacher's aide and a reading and math tutor in the after-school homework center. R.A. then enrolled in a community college. In fall 1996, he entered a degree program at the University of Massachusetts at Boston with the eventual goal of becoming an optometrist.

THE PROGRAM ELEMENTS THAT HAVE ENABLED SUCCESS

Pati Pwogram nan ki te Bay Bonjan Rezilta

Staff identified four elements that they believe are key in enabling the success of the students and the program:

1. The commitment and dedication of the native language literacy teacher
2. The relationship between native language and ESL instruction, and between the native language literacy teachers and ESL teachers
3. The interdisciplinary, thematic, and self-contained instructional format
4. The self-determination of the students

The first, and what all agreed was the most important element, is the dedication of Lionel Hogu, the native language literacy teacher. His commitment, creativity, preparation, positive outlook toward the students, and instructional approach were described as essential. His long history with the program, including his role in its development and maintenance, were also mentioned as intrinsic to program stability and success.

However, as both ESL and literacy teachers and the assistant headmaster mentioned, the lack of consistent support from the central office for Hogu and the program continue to be obstacles that need to be addressed. After eight years in the program, Hogu says he still "feels like an outsider." He elaborated,

> The program is still not recognized by the Boston Public Schools, nor is it supported by people in Court Street [the central office]. At Hyde Park High School there is some recognition and support but it's not generalized. It's something like a program in parentheses, not a "real" program...an experiment that's been going on for eight years. In part, this is because people refuse to recognize the need...or that a problem exists in terms of a lack of knowledge and literacy skills even for American kids.

A second key element identified by staff, particularly those actively involved in the program, is the connection between native language and ESL instruction and between the native language and ESL teachers. As Maria Moreira, the ESL teacher, explained,

> A key element of why it [the program] works is because there's like a chain between me and Mr. Hogu....He does the theme, and I follow in English.

> Once the students have the concept from the native language, they can move on, spell, write, and talk. The result of this working together is that students move into English quicker. It saves time and energy. It should be this way even among mainstream teachers. If we could just connect everybody–teachers working together–our jobs would be easier and kids would benefit more.

Another ESL teacher who taught in the program several years before described the importance of the native language and ESL collaboration in terms of the level of comfort it creates for students. She explained that this collaboration promotes a familiar atmosphere and a way of learning where students "can let themselves grow." Yet while staff perceive the collaboration between native and ESL instruction as a key element for student success, the turnover of ESL teachers about every two years has, as Hogu pointed out, prevented consistent, long-term collaboration. One year, he had to cover both the native language and ESL components.[17]

The third key element is the interdisciplinary, thematic approach and the program's self-contained instructional format. As the head of the bilingual education department, Gary Daphnis, commented,

> Having the majority of classes with one teacher allows for intensive instruction and an in-depth focus on students' needs. Mr. Hogu gets to really know the students and their weaknesses and strengths. He can connect math, science, and literacy in ways that make sense for the students, such as through themes. In the eight years we have been using this approach, we see that time after time it works.

Former students also commented about this format and approach in their interviews:

> The advantage is that it was better for us. The teacher connected everything together. Nothing was isolated–from first period to the fourth one, from one discipline to the next. That was a great advantage.

> It was better for us, because we did not have a good understanding of the system. We grasped everything easier with just one teacher.

> In my opinion, if we had to run from one class to the next, we would not be able to remember everything we had to learn.

However, for present literacy program students, the self-contained format also had its disadvantages. As one student noted,

> It was very helpful. But sometimes we got tired of sitting in just one room. That made us sleepy. When we have different classes, we walk a little bit.

While former students were able to see the clear academic advantages the format offered, many of the present students felt the stigma, imposed by others, of having four classes with one teacher. As one student commented,

> Whenever the students see us in the hallway, they say that the reason why we have so many classes with Mr. Hogu is because we are handicapped.

A former student, sympathetic to this concern, helped put it into perspective by again highlighting the connection between the format and student achievement. As he noted,

> Other students tease them and call them dumb, handicapped because they are in Mr. Hogu's class. I don't think they should pay attention to that. Myself, I don't listen to anybody, nor do I count on them. I know what I want. If the students who are progressing well now had paid attention to that kind of criticism, they would not be where they are right now.

The fourth element identified by staff was the determination of the students. Despite their huge academic gap in comparison to other students and the stigma they confront as a result, literacy program students have shown they can apply themselves and make it. As one administrator noted, "This is self-determination against so many odds."

John Barnes also emphasized the complexity and significance of this struggle:

> Even though these Haitian students have very limited experience with formal education and often have been away from school for many years, they come with expectations that they can someday be doctors, lawyers, or other professionals. They have dreams and goals and here in the program and in the school, they work very hard with the hope of realizing them. Most also have responsibilities outside school: jobs, family responsibilities, etc., that make it even more difficult to find time to do homework and study, yet almost all do find the time. This is a group of students who are serious and dedicated despite the obstacles they face in school and in society.

Staff mentioned Barnes's dedication and commitment as a particularly important source of support for students.

The students' determination is exemplified in a poignant exchange between a student interviewer and a former student. At the end of one of the paired student interviews, the student interviewer asked the former student, "What would you wish for me?"

FORMER STUDENT: I would wish that you would do everything in your power to succeed so that you may leave this class and be a model to those coming after you. In that way, you would be an incentive for them to strive harder and succeed.

STUDENT INTERVIEWER: Thank you for your advice. I will make sure that I study harder so that I can catch up with you. Would you like that?

FORMER STUDENT: Sure.

CHALLENGES AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Defi ak Sa ki ka fèt pou Amelyorasyon

Staff and students identified the following areas for improvement:

- Stronger and more consistent central office support
- Recognition of specific training and skills required of literacy teachers and designation of stable native language literacy and ESL teacher positions
- Consistent explanation to entering students of the purpose and nature of the Haitian Literacy Program and the reasons for their placement in the program
- The inclusion of a second level of the program that might be offered through specifically designed classes rather than through the self-contained format
- Appropriate electives
- Vocational/occupational training
- After-school opportunities that might build upon students' interests and develop or enhance occupational skills

The most crucial area for improvement is the need for stronger central office support, including better coordination and communication among the central office, the school, and the program; and increased funding for staff, materials, and material development. A second area for improvement is the need to designate program teachers through a specialized position that requires specific preparation and/or training.

A third challenge and area for improvement is students' lack of understanding about their program placement. In the process of constructing the interview questions, current literacy students noted that most of them had not understood at the beginning of the program why their class schedules were different from their bilingual program peers. They said they did not initially know that they had been placed in a literacy program.

Consequently, they were interested in finding out if former students had been informed of the program format. The responses of former students inter-

viewed also indicated that most former students did not know at the beginning why they had been placed in the program or that the purpose of the program was to develop their academic skills. In the paired interviews, only one student said he understood at the outset the connection between placement and his learning needs. However, in the open student discussion, one student did articulate for the group why they were all there:

> They chose this program for us because we had little schooling in Haiti. They could not place us in class with more advanced students. We would not be able to keep up with the class work. That's the reason why they placed us in this class.

Barnes, Hogu, and Gary Daphnis all stated that this placement is explained to students when they enroll. It is possible that the majority of students preferred to say they did not know rather than expose their lack of schooling. However, the general confusion that virtually all students expressed suggests that communication about program placement needs improvement.

Another need, suggested by the native language and ESL teachers, is a second program level for students unable to complete the program in one year. While a second program level has existed at different times during the last ten years, it has been eliminated in recent years. Students unable to complete the program in one year must now repeat the class again. Rather than helping to further develop students' skills, it has caused obvious problems, including a lack of interest.

One way that this issue might be addressed is through the development of additional content area classes specifically designed for second-year literacy students. For example, while second-year students might take math in the bilingual program, they could take classes that are more language- and literacy-dependent, such as social science or physical science, with a teacher willing to focus on students' developing literacy skills and needs.

The addition of appropriate electives was also identified as a challenge and area for improvement. As the assistant headmaster noted,

> John [the guidance counselor for bilingual students] is always looking for elective classes that he can put the literacy students in. Classes where literacy is not a necessity. He says it would be good for them to have two electives. It's impossible to get them even one; there is no space and there is

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> resistance from the teachers...What we also need is help in helping the teachers understand that these students are not a burden, that they can enrich their classes.

Vocational and occupational training, school-to-career opportunities, job placement, and career counseling are also important factors to consider when designing literacy programs.[8] Their inclusion in the Haitian Literacy Program, however, is limited. Part of the difficulty of including these components is that Boston has a separate vocational/occupational school, with a schedule that alternates a week of vocational instruction with a week of academic instruction. Although literacy programs for several language groups exist in the vocational/occupational school, teachers maintain that access for literacy students at this school is still limited. Vocational instructors say they cannot work with students who do not have the appropriate level of literacy and basic skills. Another problem is that the school-to-career programs and opportunities in Boston public schools serve only English-speaking students.

John Barnes has made efforts to involve literacy students in Hyde Park High School's partnership with BankBoston. However, given the strong relationship between banking and literacy and numeracy skills, student participation has involved tutorships rather than occupational training. As Barnes points out, obtaining school-to-career opportunities and job placements is more complicated for Haitian students since many do not have the necessary legal documentation. One recommendation is that the vocational/occupational and school-to-career opportunities for literacy students be included in future program developments.

The last area noted for improvement was after-school opportunities. Because many students are unable to work, some staff felt that after-school programs which could enhance the students' academic and occupational skill development would be helpful.

A final challenge—not mentioned by students or staff—is establishing connections between the lessons learned from the literacy program and Hyde Park High School's comprehensive reform planning efforts, part of the superintendent's directive for systemic reform. It is important to ensure that the needs of students with limited formal schooling are supported through comprehensive reform planning at this and other city schools. This type of support is currently nonexistent.

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CONCLUSION

Pou Fini

This study provided an overview of the Haitian Literacy Program at Boston's Hyde Park High School and documented students' educational progress and the program elements that have enabled academic achievement, high school graduation, and higher education participation. As the oldest program for students with limited formal schooling in Boston, and that we know of, in the nation, the Haitian Literacy Program offers valuable lessons for other schools and school districts concerned with how best to meet the academic needs of similar populations.

For students who had no more than several years of formal schooling before entering high school, the fact that at least half of these students graduate and 39% of these graduates go on to college shows success. While it is impossible to say how much of this success is due to the program and how much to a particularly dedicated and able teacher, all of the elements and characteristics described here (both program- and teacher-based) are making a difference. Staff in other schools interested in replicating the Haitian Literacy Program or developing their own models should take all of these elements into account, including the program's bilingual literacy focus. They may also want to seek the expertise and advice of Lionel Hogu, the native language literacy teacher.

Before this study, success was something that program staff and students sensed. However, they had no documentation of this success, nor did they have a written program description to share with others interested in creating a literacy program. Involving staff and students in the research process not only provided a broader lens through which to view the program, but also increased student learning and understanding. Staff and students gave this study an "insider" perspective that "outside" researchers alone could neither approximate nor replicate.

The questions, comments, and suggestions of the staff and students directed the inquiry, revealed strengths and weaknesses of the program, and gave the program and the study a human significance. Collaborative inquiry and pedagogical exchange were essential elements of the study that supported the findings. From this process emerged an enhanced understanding and dialogue

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among students and staff and a level of ownership and responsibility for the program.

Students with limited formal schooling are an increasing population in U.S. secondary schools, a population seldom discussed in the literature or considered in academic offerings or program design. These students can no longer be ignored. By recognizing the complex learning needs of these students and by describing one effective instructional approach, the LAB hopes to stir interest and attention.

Accepting that there are students in secondary schools across the nation who lack literacy and basic skills because of limited schooling is a first step in addressing the "all children" agenda. The second and even more crucial step is developing and putting into practice program structures and teaching approaches that best serve the learning potential and unique realities of these students.

Education reform and democracy will be served only when we open our eyes to the realities, possibilities, and differences within the student populations of today and demonstrate a true commitment to educate all children, regardless of their race, language, class, or educational background. While Boston still has a long way to go, the Haitian Literacy Program is a positive example of such commitment.

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APPENDIX A

SOURCES OF DATA

1. Document and Record Reviews

The staff from the LAB at Brown University reviewed and summarized relevant documents related to school population statistics and school and program descriptions. LAB staff [9] worked with John Barnes, the guidance counselor for bilingual students, in examining, recording, and analyzing student records, including:

- entry information. This information included the date enrolled in the Boston public school system and in the Haitian Literacy Program, previous schooling including years and place, and bilingual step (the student's level in terms of English language ability).
- test scores when available
- student grades within the literacy program and after mainstreaming
- year of graduation or reasons for not graduating (for example, withdrawing from school, moving)

2. Ethnographic observation

Ethnographic observations were conducted by me in literacy program classrooms in spring 1996.

3. Interviews

One-on-one interviews with school and program administrators and with literacy, bilingual, and ESL teachers

I conducted one-on-one interviews with school and program administrators, and with literacy program and bilingual program teachers in spring 1996. These interviews included the school's assistant headmaster, all Haitian teachers in the bilingual program and ESL teachers who received students after they complete the literacy program, and the two literacy program teachers. Guiding questions for these interviews were developed with the head of the bilingual education department, the guidance counselor for bilingual students, and the native language literacy teacher. The questions were:

- What do you know about and what is your involvement in the literacy program?
- What has been your experience with literacy program students in your classes?
- Do you believe the literacy program has impacted the academic and social success of Haitian students? If so, how?
- What are the factors or elements that make the program work? What suggestions do you have for improvement?

One-on-one interviews with former students

One-on-one interviews with former students were conducted either in person or by telephone by the bilingual guidance counselor. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain higher education enrollment and/or job experiences of former literacy students who graduated from the Boston Public Schools.

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Paired student interviews

Paired student interviews were conducted between present literacy students and mainstreamed, former literacy students still attending Hyde Park High School in order to explore student perspectives on the literacy program and its effect or impact on students' academic achievement. One present literacy student was paired with one former literacy student, with the former asking questions of the latter. A number of paired interviews occurred simultaneously during two class periods. The interviews were audio-recorded and later translated and transcribed.

The guiding questions for the interviews were constructed by the present literacy students as a class activity and written down by the native language literacy teacher as follows:

1. *Eske ou konnen poukisa yo te chwazi klas sa a pou ou?*
   Did you know why you were placed in this class?
2. *Kisa ou te panse de klas la?*
   What did you think of the class?
3. *Ki jan de travay yo tap fè nan klas la?*
   What kind of work did you do in the class?
4. *Lè nou te nan klas la kijan nou te konn boule?*
   How did it work out in the class?
5. *Ki enterè pou nou te gen 4 klas avèk yon sèl profesè?*
   What were the advantages of having 4 classes with one teacher?
6. *Ki sa yo te aprann ou nan klas la?*
   What did they teach you in the class?
7. *Ki sa nou te panse de klas la? Eske sa yo te fè a li te ede nou?*
   What did you think of the class? Was it helpful?
8. *Nou menm ki te pase nan klas la anvan m, ki sa li te fè pou nou?*
   As my predecessor, tell me what purpose did it serve?
9. *Si nan komansman ou pat fò koman fè ou vin pi fo pase lot yo?*
   If at first you were not very smart, how did you become smarter?
10. *Ki pwoblèm nou te genyen ak lòt elev yo? Eske yo toujou ap farouche nou jouk kounye a?*
    What kind of difficulty did you encounter with the other students? Do they keep teasing you?

4. Focus group discussions *(present and mainstreamed students)*

Several focus group discussions were held with present literacy students and mainstreamed current and former literacy students together in order to explore students' perspectives and understanding about the program and its impact on academic knowledge and skill development. These discussions took place during class sessions and were co-led by the native language literacy teacher and me. They were audio-recorded and later transcribed and translated.

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APPENDIX B

OFFICE OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Native Language Assessment

ADMINISTRATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS

NATIVE LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Administrator's Instructions *(English)*

The test should be administered by a teacher who speaks the native language.

It may be possible to administer the reading and math tests to more than one student at a time. If this situation arises, is important to allow students to work at their own pace. This is not a timed test.

A. Oral Interview

Introduce yourself and make the student feel comfortable before you begin.

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where were you born?
4. How long have you been in the United States?
5. What was the name of the school you last attended?
6. What was your favorite subject in school?

B. Reading

Explain to the student, *"You will be taking a short reading test and short math test. Try to complete as much of the test as you can. If you cannot complete a particular part of the test, you may skip it and go on to another part. This test is not for a grade, but rather a tool for us to find out what strengths you already have. If you don't understand the instructions to any part, ask before you go on."*

Part 1. Letter

Have student read directions silently. Make sure student understands the direction before beginning. Student should be able to complete the alphabetical sequence and draw a line from each uppercase letter to the corresponding lower case letter.

Part 2. Copying Sentences

Have student read directions, and copy the sentences as accurately as possible.

Part 3. Sequencing

The student needs to decide on the correct sequence of the picture story, then write the number of the correct order in the small box next to each picture. Student should then write a simple sentence to describe each picture. And finally, decide on a title or name for the story and write that name on the space provided.

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Part 4. Comprehension

Ask the student to write in complete sentences whenever possible. Encourage the student to be creative in responding to the questions.

The student should understand that he/she is going to write a reply to the letter from Marita. Encourage students to write as much as possible, but reassure them that it is not necessary to fill up the entire page.

Part 6. Personal Information

Give the answer sheet to the student. Have the student complete the information on the page.

C. Mathematics

Give the Mathematics Student Booklet to the student, repeating the instructions you gave earlier:

- *Finish as much of this test as you can.*
- *If you cannot finish a part of the test, skip and go to another part.*
- *Test is not for a grade. It will show us what you can do.*
- *If you do not understand the instructions, ask me.*

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BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE

OF

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

GRADES 5 - 12

NATIVE LANGUAGE READING ASSESSMENT

STUDENT BOOKLET

ENGLISH

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

50

PART 1.

Write in the letters that are missing.

a	*b*	*c*	___	*e*	___	*g*
h	*i*	___	*k*	*l*	*m*	___
___	*p*	*q*	*r*	___	*t*	*u*
v	*w*	___	*y*	___		

Match the letters.

PART 2

Copy these sentences.

1) My father's sister is my aunt.

_____

2) If I want to buy aspirin, I go to the drugstore.

_____

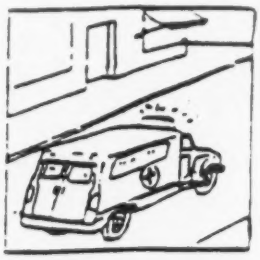
3) What time do you wake up in the morning?

_____

PART 3.

Number the pictures in order. Write a sentence for each picture.

What is a good title or name for this story? _____

☐ 

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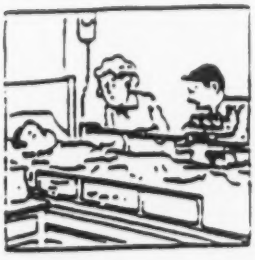
☐ 

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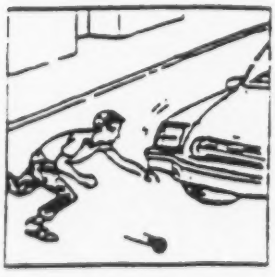
☐ 

_____

PART 4.

Look at the picture. Answer the questions. Write your answers on the lines.

1. Write the names of five things you see in the picture.

_____

2. What is happening in the picture?

_____

3. What is the woman saying to the boy?

_____

4. How does the boy feel?

_____

5. What will the boy do next?

_____

PART 5.

Read the letter. Then write your answer to the letter.

October 10, 1995

Dear Jack,

Thank you for inviting me to spend the summer vacation with you in L.A. I really had a good time. I remember all the good things we did together like riding our bicycles, eating hot dogs and grilled corn, racing on the beach and swimming in the river. But fishing is what I enjoyed the most.

I am hoping that my aunt will let you come to visit me next vacation. I'll be glad to show you San Juan. I am glad to go back to school. It looks like 9th grade will be harder than 8th. You know me, I'll manage.

Say hello to everybody for me!

Your cousin,

Marita

Write your answer to the letter below.

Write your answer to the letter below.

PART 6.

Complete the form below.

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Male/Female: _____

Father's Name: _____ Mother's Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apartment Number: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE

OF

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

GRADES 5 - 12

MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT

STUDENT BOOKLET

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

SECTION A

1. 1, 2, 3, _____, 5, 6, 7, _____, 9

2. 97, 98, 99, _____

3. 10, 20, 30, _____, 50

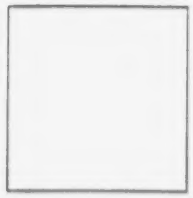
4. **Add:** 3 $15 + 6 =$ _____
   +7

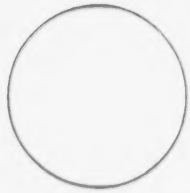
5. **Subtract:** 8 $22 - 4 =$ _____
   - 3

6. **Multiply:** $5 \times 4 =$ _____ 24
   x 3

7. **Divide:** $3\overline{)12}$ $28 \div 7 =$ _____

8. **Name the shapes:**





_____ _____

9. **You have seventeen oranges. Your friend gives you nine more oranges. How many oranges do you have now?**

_____

10. **You buy 10 pounds of potatoes. You use 3 pounds to make dinner. How many pounds remain?**

_____

SECTION B

Write the missing numbers.

11. 100, 150, 200, _____, 300

12. 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, _____

13. 33, 36, 39, 42, _____, 48

14. **Add:** 72 +26 357 +634

15. **Subtract:** 95 -54 723 -106

16. **Multiply:** 100 x30 352 x17

17. **Divide:** $8\overline{)63}$ 165 ÷ 25 = _____

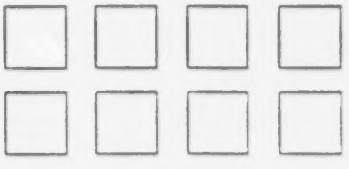
18. **You have 6 bags of mangoes with 3 mangoes in each bag. How many mangoes do you have altogether?**

_____

19. **You have 15 candies. You want to give 5 friends an equal number of your candies. How many will you give to each friend?**

_____

20. **Color half of the boxes.**



21. Write the fraction that is <u>smallest.</u>

1/4 1/3 1/8 1/2

_____

22. I left home at 7:30 and got here at 8:15. How long did it take me to get here?

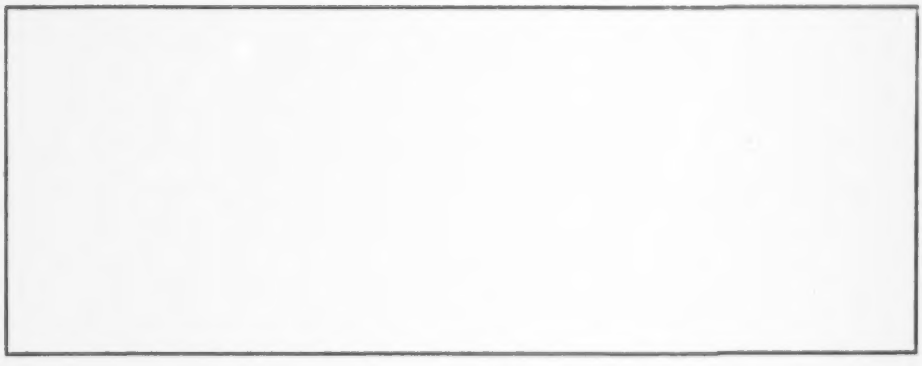
_____

LEKÒL PIBLIK NAN BOSTON

BIWO
EDIKASYON BILENG

EVALYASYON LANGAJ KREYÒL

POU MOUN KAP BAY TÈD LA
Evalyasyon Langaj *(Kreyól)*



Tès sa a, se profesè ki pale menm lang ak elèv la ki dwe bay li.

Li posib pou yo bay tès sa a, ke se swa matematik ou lèkti, a plis ke yon timoun a la fwa. Nan ka ke sa ta rive, li ta enpòtan pou tout elèv ta travay jan yo vle baske tès sa a, li pap mezire sou lè.

A. Intèvvou oral

Prezante tèt ou epi, mete etidyan a lèz nan plat li, avan ou ta kòmanse. Kòmanse pa mande keksyon, pa ekzamp: ki lang ou pale?
Ekri reponse yo, nan sa yo rele: chèklist evalyasyon elèv la. (Cale piba, wa wè keksyon yo nan plizyè lang: Cap Vè, Kreyòl Ayisyen epi Vietnamyen).

1. Ki jan ou rele?
2. Ki laj ou?
3. Kotè ou fèt?
4. Konbyen tan ou gen nan peyi (Etazini).?
5. Ki non lekòl ou te rele avan ou vini isit la?

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6. Ki lkas ou tap fè?
7. Ki sa ou te pi renmen nan lekòl ou? Poukisa?

B. Lekti

Esplike elèv kounye a ke li pral pran yon tès: lekti ak matematic. Eseye fè tout tès la si ou kapab. Si ou gen yon mòso keksyon ou pa kap fè, ou te mèt kite ipi fè yon lòt. Tès sa a, li pa ofisyel, ou pap gen pwen pouli, men se yon jan pounn ka wè ki fos ou, ak ki jan ou kab debouye ou. Si ou pata konprann anyen menm, mande profesè ya avan ou derape.

Pati Nimewo 1. Lèt

Fè elèv li direksyon an tou dousman pou si elèv la kab konprann sa li pral fè ya avan li kòmanse. Elèv dwe kapab ranpli egzèsis sa yo. Li dwe kòmanse pa trase yon tirè nan chak kare anwo yo, ak lètki menm bagay avek li ya anba yo.

Pati Nimewo 2. Ekriti

Fè elèv la li fraz la, e pi fèl kopye fraz sa a egzakteman jan ke li li la.

Pati Nimewo 3. Divièt

Elèv la dwe decide pou devine istwa foto ki deval'l lan. E pi gen poul ekri nimewo agzak la, nan ti bwat ki anba foto a. Lè li fini, elèv dwe ekri yon ti fraz anba chak foto, poul eksplike sa li ye. Lè li fini nèt, li dwe bay foto a yon non, e pi la ekri'l nan ti espas li wè ya.

Pati Niomewo 4. Entèlijans

Mande elèv la poul ekri yon ti fraz konplèt lè li kapab (yon fraz ke fè sans). Ankouraje 'l poul kreye yon bèl bagay ki genyen rapò ak keksyon yo mande 'l la.

Pati Niomewo 5. Lèt

Elèv la dwe konprann ke li pral fè yon repons pou lèt ke Marita te ekril la. Ankouraje li poul ekri tou otan 'l kapab. Men lap enpòtan poul ta ranpli tout paj la.

Pati Niomewo 6. Enfòmasyon Pèsonèl

Remèt elèv la fèy papye repons la. Fè li ranpli enfòmasyon ki nan papye ya.

C. Matematik

Bay elèv la liv matematik la, bali men m ranséyman ou te bali avan yo. "Fè tout sa ou kapab nan tès sa a. Si ou pa ka fini, fè mòso kite mose, kontinye nan vou lòt. Tès s a, li pa ofisyèl, ou pap gen pwen pouli, men se yon jan pounn ka wè ki fos ou, e ak ki jan ou kab debouye ou. Si ou pata konprann anyen, mande profesè ou, avan ou derape."

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LEKÒL PIBLIK NAN BOSTON

BIWO

EDIKASYON BILENG

GRAD 5 - 12

EVALYASYON LEKTI LANG KREYÒL

LIV ELÈV LA

KREYÒL

NON: _____ DAT: _____

PATI 1.

Ekri lèt ki manke yo.

a	*b*	*c*	___	*e*	___	*g*
h	*i*	___	*k*	*l*	*m*	___
___	*p*	*q*	*r*	___	*t*	*u*
v	*w*	___	*y*	___		

Lèt ki menm, mete you ansamm.

PATI 2

Copy these sentences.

1) Sè papa m se matant mwen

_____

2) Si mwen bezwen achte aspirin, se pou m ale nan famasi.

_____

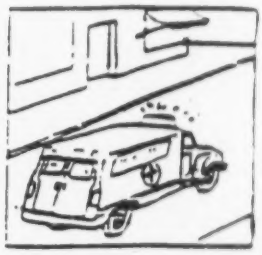
3) Ki lè ou leve le maten?

_____

PATI 3.

Met nimewo pou chak foto. Ekri you fraz akote chak foto.

Ki non ou ta bay istwa sa a? _____

☐ 

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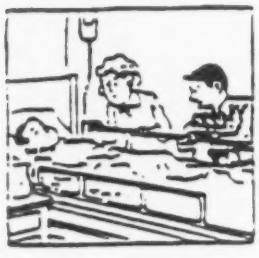
☐ 

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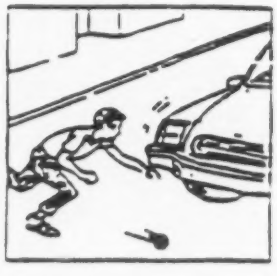
☐ 

_____

PATI 4.

Gade foto a. Reponn kesyon you. Ekri repons ou yo sou tras la.

1. Ekri non 5 bagay ou wè non foto a.

_____

2. Sa kap pase nan foto a?

_____

3. Kisa fi a di ti gason an?

_____

4. Kisa ti gason an santi?

_____

5. Kisa ti gason an pral fe aprè?

_____

PATI 5.

Li lèt sa a. Ekri repons ou to bay lèt sa a.

10 Okòb 1995

Monchè Jak,

Mèsi pou tèt ou te envite m vin pase vakans ak ou nan Los Angeles. Mwen te pase yon bon tan. Mwen sonje tout bon bagay nou te fè ansamm, tankou monte bisiklèt, manje :hot dogs", ak mayi griye, kouri sou plaj la, ak naje nan rivière a. Men, sè peche pwason an, mwen te renmen plis.

M ta renmen pou matant mwen ta kite ou vini pase vakans avek mwen kounye a. M ta trè kontan poum ta montre ou Jacmel. M'trè kontan m tounen lekòl. Li sanble ke klas 9ème pral pi di ke klas 8ème nan. Ou konen m, m'kap degaje m.

Di tout moun bonjou pou mwen.

Kouzin

Marita

Ekri repons sou lign sa yo.

Write your answer to the letter below.

R

Si

I

70

PART 6.

Ranpli fòm sa a.

Siyati: _____ Prenon: _____

Dat ou fèt: _____ Gason/Fi: _____

Non Papa ou: _____ Non Manman ou: _____

Adrès: _____

Vil/Eta/Kòd Postal: _____

Nimewo telefòn:: _____

LEKÒL PIBLIK NAN BOSTON

BIWO

EDIKASYON BILENG

GRADES 5 - 12

EVALYASYON MATHEMATK

LIV ELÈV LA

STUDENT BOOKLET

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

SEKSYON A

1. 1, 2, 3, _____, 5, 6, 7, _____, 9

2. 97, 98, 99, _____

3. 10, 20, 30, _____, 50

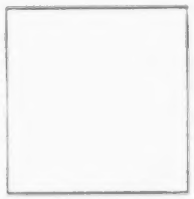
4. **Adisyon:** 3 15 + 6 = _____
   +7

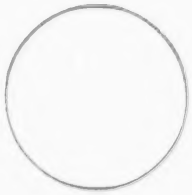
5. **Soustraksyon::** 8 22 - 4 = _____
   - 3

6. **Miltiplikasyon:** 5 x 4 = _____ 24
   x 3

7. **Divizyon:** 3)12 28 ÷ 7 = _____

8. **Ki non fòm sa a?**





_____ _____

9. **Ou gen sèt (7) zoranj. Zanmi ou ba ou 9 ankò. Konbyen ou gen kounye a?**

_____

10. **Ou achte dis (10) liv pomtè. Ou manje twa (3) liv. Konbyen liv ou rete?**

_____

SEKSYON B

Ekri nimewo ki manke you.

11. 100, 150, 200, _____, 300

12. 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, _____

13. 33, 36, 39, 42, _____, 48

14. **Adisyon:** 72 + 26 = _____ 357 + 634 = _____

15. **Soustraksyon:** 95 - 54 = _____ 723 - 106 = _____

16. **Miltiplikasyon:** 100 x 30 = _____ 352 x 17 = _____

17. **Divizyon:** $8\overline{)63}$ = _____ 165 ÷ 25 = _____

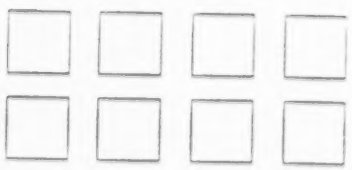
18. **Ou gen 6 pakè mango ak 3 mango nan chak. Konbeyn mango ou genyen?**

_____

19. **Ou gen 15 sirèt. Ou vle separe yo avèk 5 zanmi egal ego. Konbye ou ap bay chak?**

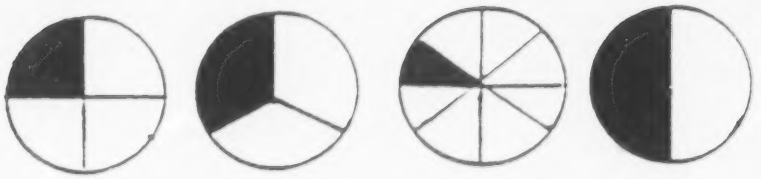
_____

20. **Pentire mwatye nan bwat sa yo.**



21. **Ekri fraksyon ki pi pita a.**

1/4 1/3 1/8 1/2



_____

22. **Mwen kite lakay mwen a 7:30 a.m., mwen rive at 8:15 a.m. Konbyen tan li pran m poum rive?**

_____

APPENDIX C

LITERACY CHECKLIST

Student Name _____

Language of Assessment _____

Scoring key: 0 = no evidence 1 = beginning to develop
2 = developing 3 = controls

QUALITY		0	1	2	3
Q1.	Demonstrates persistence				
Q2.	Is able to complete a task				
Q3.	Shows the desire and motivation to read and write				
Q4.	Uses print for own purposes				
Q5.	Can read back own writing				
Q6.	Values conveyance of meaning over mechanics				
Q7.	Can use prior knowledge for problem solving				
Q8.	Can use visuals to develop short narrative or dialogue				
Q9.	Uses print for communicating thoughts and ideas				
Q10.	Attempts to self-correct own writing				
Q11.	Takes risks to read and write previously unknown words				
Q12.	Demonstrates a sense of ordered thinking				
Q13.	Demonstrates creativity in writing				
Q14.	Can work independently				
Q15.	Can work cooperatively				
Q16.	Reads and writes for pleasure				
Q17.	Takes responsibility for and controls own learning process				
Q18.	Questions content of text				
Q19.	Can use context clues to attempt new words				
Q20.	Can move beyond personal point of view				
Q21.	Can argue a position				
Q22.	Is able to locate, use and invent resources to convey meaning				
Q23.	Demonstrates the ability to think critically				

		0	1	2	3
MECHANICS					
M1.	Uses left to right directionality				
M2.	Can distinguish parts of page (front, back, top, bottom)				
M3.	Uses paper conventionally				
M4.	Uses appropriate space between words				
M5.	Can identify, say, and write the letters of the alphabet				
M6.	Can identify, say, and write number 1-1000				
M7.	Can compose a short sentence				
M8.	Can arrange pictures in sequential order				
M9.	Understands the structure of a sentence				
M10.	Understands basic punctuation marks such as comma, period, question mark				
M11.	Uses upper and lower case letters appropriately				
M12.	Can recognize, write, and understand monetary symbols				
M13.	Can copy written text				
M14.	Can take dictation				
M15.	Understands proper format of paragraph				
COMPREHENSION					
C1.	Can read and understand words				
C2.	Can interpret life survival symbols: e.g. environmental, pictorial				
C3.	Can read and understand phrases				
C4.	Can follow simple written directions				
C5.	Understands concept of a sentence				
C6.	Can read back sense of a sentence				
C7.	Can read and understand short passage				
C8.	Can understand and interpret various graphic styles and forms of print				
C9.	Can identify main idea				
C10.	Can identify supporting details to determine whether statement is true or false				
C11.	Can recall details and sequence				
C12.	Can use appropriate words to complete a close passage				
C13.	Can ask questions about text				
C14.	Can distinguish fact from fantasy				
C15.	Can interpret abbreviations and acronyms				
C16.	Can use details to predict events or circumstances				
C17.	Can draw conclusions				
C18.	Can summarize text				
C19.	Can retell text in own words				
C20.	Can read and understand newspaper and literature				
C21.	Can distinguish fact from opinion				
C22.	Can make inferences				

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Comments:

— Developed in 1988 by Catherine Walsh in conjunction with teachers from Boston English High School Kreyol/ESL Literacy Program.

This checklist is designed as an assessment record of high school students' literacy-related abilities in English and in the native language. Quality, mechanics, and comprehension competencies are listed in development sequence and can be applied to student placement in a three-level literacy program. Level 1 would be for students with little or no formal schooling, illiterate in their native language and in English. Level 2 and level 3 build upon the competencies developed in Level 1; both are necessary prerequisites to literacy development and to placement in standard high school ESL courses.

The association of the checklist competencies with levels are as follows:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Q1 - 7	Q8 - 17	Q18 - 23
M1 - 7	M8 - 12	M13 - 15
C1 - 4	C5 - 12	C13 - 22

Because literacy is an ongoing process and because students' previous experiences may differentially impact literacy development, the grouping of competencies by level as listed above may not always be accurate or relevant for all students. In other words, some students may be at the beginning level of literacy acquisition but may demonstrate an ability associated with higher level competencies. Teacher judgment must therefore always accompany assessment as well as placement decisions. Generally reflected in the competencies are abilities which all students need to be able to function effectively in a bilingual program.

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ENDNOTES

[1] Personal conversations with Boston Public Schools' Law Coordinator, spring 1995.

[2] Some attention has been given, however, to addressing the needs of low-literacy students at the elementary level, so see Hamayan (1994), Hamayan and Pfleger (1987), and Ioga (1996).

[3] One exception has been the Cape Verdean Literacy Program at Madison Park High School. As with the Haitian Program, a dedicated core group of teachers has worked for a number of years to develop and maintain the program.

[4] *MASTER PAC and Boston Latino Parents Association v. Boston School Committee.*

[5] For further reading on the effectiveness of the case study method in this kind of program evaluation, see Owens, Haenn, and Fehrenbacher (1976); Fehrenbacher, Owens, and Owens (1976); and Patton (1990).

[6] For a discussion of the theoretical antecedents and practical uses of collaborative inquiry as an investigative approach, see Watkins (1992).

[7] Boston's "controlled choice plan" allows parents to make three choices of schools they would like their child to attend. These choices are then analyzed by the Boston public school system and students are placed based on their choices and on the maintenance of racial balance criteria. For students in need of bilingual programs, choices are limited to the schools that offer these programs in the appropriate language and to the availability of seats in the program.

[8] Estimate obtained from Hyde Park High School's bilingual guidance counselor.

[9] While Hyde Park High School has been able to successfully transition students into the regular bilingual program within one to two years, this may not be true for programs and teachers beginning new programs. As later discussed, the instructional approach and focus, the dedication and experience of staff, and the close coordination between the native language and ESL teachers have created an optimal environment for student progress. Schools developing new programs need to take into account such essential characteristics.

[10] This model is described in the *Amended Consent Order* (1994) and in Walsh (1991).

[11] Topics based on the newcomer theme that I have seen emerge or that teachers mentioned include climate changes (the differences in climate between Haiti and Boston and the physical, social, and financial implications of these differences) and transportation (modes of transportation used to get from Haiti to the United States, as well as the differences in transportation used in rural Haiti and urban America). These topics became subthemes that also guided instruction.

[12] For a more detailed description of how teachers plan, organize, and coordinate native language and ESL instruction within this theme-based approach, see Franklin, Hogu, and Mankin (1991), available upon request from the LAB at Brown University.

[13] The native language teacher has recently been given access to the computer lab, which he often uses to help students build their literacy skills. The computer lab also affords an opportunity to vary the one-classroom model.

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[11] These programs, based on the work of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and prevalent in a number of Caribbean, Latin American, and African nations, offer an approach to literacy development that is tied to consciousness raising and social change.

[15] Interviews were transcribed and translated from Kreyol to English by Renote Francois and Lionel Hogu.

[16] As was previously noted, 80% of students are able to make the transition to "regular" bilingual classes after one year in the Haitian Literacy Program.

[17] Because ESL teachers are placed by the central office based on total numbers of bilingual students in the school and not on literacy program needs, the number of ESL teachers and their assignments can shift yearly. While the Title I *Consent Decree* mandates that Title I-funded native language and ESL staff be assigned to the literacy program (as a way to address staffing concerns), Hyde Park High School is no longer designated as a Title I school under new federal, state, and city regulations. Pressure from plaintiff attorneys resulted in the district picking up the cost of the native language teacher position for the first time in 1996. However, only a portion of the ESL teacher's position is covered because she teaches only two classes in the literacy program. The potential for instability thus remains.

[18] These components, which can help students see the practical significance of the program and help keep them from leaving school, are described and mandated in the *Amended Consent Order*. However, these components remain to be put into effect.

[19] The collection and organization of record review information was done by Andra Anderson. I oversaw the record reviews and conducted data analysis. I also completed the document reviews, ethnographic observations, and the one-on-one staff interviews.

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